

CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

Published every other Saturday Morning, at the Argus Office.....R. STREETER Editor and Proprietor.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.]

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

[PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.]

VOL. V.

PORLAND, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1825.

* No. 9.

Doctrinal.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

A SERMON.

(Concluded from our last.)

"For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."—1 Epis. Gen. ii. 21.

It is a notorious fact, my friends, that knowledge is unfriendly to these excitements. Hence it is, that they prevail almost exclusively among the less informed. I know there are some honorable exceptions to this rule, as indeed there are to all general rules. It is sometimes the case that people of penetration and sagacity are, owing to the sentiments of sympathy, which will cause almost any thing to catch when it becomes very general among them, made the subjects of such excitements. But with such, they are seldom lasting; for in due time the powers of the understanding will again resume the ascendancy of the passions; and reason will once more mount the throne of the mind. I might add, that the effects of these excitements are not generally lasting among any. The flames of the passions generally subside, like the flames of combustibles, as suddenly as they are raised. What is sudden and violent, seldom lasts long; and if it does not demolish something sound and valuable, it is because an all-merciful Providence sees fit to counteract its natural tendency.

When a religion of the passions and not of the understanding, kindles its flames in a place, it proselytes those whose passions are strong and whose understandings are feeble. Hence it is that it prevails more generally, I had almost said universally, among the female and youthful class of society. It is from a knowledge of this truth, that the artful advocates of these excitements avoid the thinking and sound minded part of the male class, and level their attacks upon females and children. This is a notorious fact of which none of the observers of these movements are ignorant. My respected female auditors! you will certainly take no offence with that plainness of speech in which we indulge; when I assure you that your presence in this house at this time, is a satisfactory evidence that you are an exception to this rule. We before remarked that to all general rules there were honorable exceptions; and were you not of this latter class, we should not have been honored with your attendance. Our duty to society and to the cause of rational christianity demands of us that we should speak plainly. These things we do not mention out of disrespect, but from compassion for your sex. We mention them, that you may be upon your guard against the insidious attacks which have heretofore proved too successful among your ranks.

I have sometimes thought, (pardon me in the comparison) that the fatal policy of the serpent in the garden of Eden, which induced him to make his first and only attack upon its female inhabitant, has been too much valued and followed in latter times. We have an account of its prevalence in the world, in the days of the apostles, when St. Paul condemns the practice of certain enthusiastic persons who crept into mens' houses and led captive the female sex, probably in the absence of the master of the family. We said that we mentioned these things out of compassion, for your admonition. We do so—for we are well persuaded that those, who are led captive, do not know and understand the nature of that cause, which they are henceforth under obligations to support.

How few are there, who are thus pressed into the support of the peculiar views of such a denomination as they may join, that have carefully examined and understandingly acknowledge the long controverted articles of faith which, while their minds are yet weak, they have sworn to support. For instance: the doctrines of total depravity, original sin, vicarious suffering, endless punishment; the Trinity, election and reprobation, and the form and application of baptism, and others which we might name, have engaged in controversy men of the greatest researches, and have not as yet been positively settled. How few I say are there, who have examined these contested points, as all ought to examine them before they settle an opinion upon them, and fully understand what they do, when a clergyman, on the day of their admission, reads to them that creed, which they must profess fully to believe, without adding to or taking from it, under the pains and penalties of excommunications? Satisfied we are, that persons who thus make up their opinions prematurely, (or rather I should have said, who thus inconsiderately take the belief of another already prepared for them,) should be the subjects of our tender commiseration. It is true, we are told, that such have the liberty to subscribe or to refuse; but the liberty of being led, is not much preferable to the liberty of a slave!

I said before that the principal cause of these passionate excitements under consideration, was the terror communicated to weak and feeble minds by the preaching of endless misery. Take this great pillar away, and we should see no reformations which were not after the example of the primitive conversions to christianity; no reformations which did not inform the understanding, curb and regulate the passions and raise the tone of public and private morals. All religion originating in fear, is a religion contrary to love, and consequently not genuine. So much evidence does this truth carry with it, that some of the best informed among the clergy have recently acknowledged, that the experience of a convert, which recognized this doctrine as an inducement to become religious, was not such as to entitle them to church communion. Now this we believe: and the reason why we believe, that the denunciations of endless misery do not make true christians, is, that the doctrine is false; and as such cannot subserve a valuable purpose among the preached truths of christianity. But even admitting it to be true, it is acknowledged that it has in reality nothing to do in making christians. Then it might as well not be preached, as enforced; nay more, it might as well be false as true. Why is it, that these same persons, who have made the concession, continue to condemn us for not preaching this unnecessary and unprofitable doctrine, is a question which we leave for you to decide.

It has lately been demonstrated by a critic in theology, a clergyman whose acquaintance with ancient and modern literature, seems to be as great as any ones, that the doctrine of the eternity of hell torments as a place of endless misery, was not taught either in the Hebrew or Greek scriptures; in the writings of the Old or New Testaments. He has furthermore proved that there was no word in either of those languages which could convey the idea of such a place or state as is now understood by hell. The learned, who have examined the subject, know this and will not deny it. I am not without my apprehensions, that in examining this subject with a fearless hand, I may have raised your minds to pass sentence of condemnation for what you may call my temerity. I hope however, you will not do it hastily without just cause. You

who know me cannot for a moment suppose that I should labour to inculcate that which, I believe, would prove ruinous to your present or future happiness. That you may possess both these, he who knows my heart, knows that it is my most sincere and fervent desire. In warning you therefore against a passionate religion, I have done what I conceive, my duty to God, to you and to myself demands. Yet, as was observed in the former part of this discourse, we believe in the pure religion of Christ, as much as those who boast of it more and deny it unto us. We believe that religion is the following of Christ; and that, that we are all able to perform. We believe in the language of our text, that "Christ suffered for us, leaving an example, that we should follow his steps." The following his steps we believe to be religion; and here the road is plain. It is but to have our affections raised, like his, to the great Father of our spirits and the Author of all mercies; and the doing unto others what we would that others should do unto us. The religion of Christ is a practical thing, it does not consist in speculative points of faith—in forms, in ceremonies or in zeal without knowledge. If you would be christians, go to your bibles and read the history of your Saviour's life, and walk in his steps. "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." Visit the sick, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, supply the destitute; freely ye have received, freely give. Instruct the ignorant, pity the deluded, love your enemies. In short follow Christ, who went about doing good. There are many kinds of religion in the world as relates to faith, and there has been, God knows, much contention between them; but there is but one kind of religion that is pure and undefiled, and that relates to practice. "Pure religion and undefiled before God, &c.

About this religion there never was one controversy—in it there never originated one quarrel; and all the contention for orthodoxy in it, was for the orthodoxy of a good life. Give me such a religion as this—give me to know that I imitate my Saviour's conduct, and I would not exchange it for the most orthodox creed—the most flaming zeal and the most sounding professions in the world. Give me this, and I am satisfied. And when death's cold hand shall close my eyes in darkness, and my body again revisits its parent earth to mingle once more with the clods of the valley—to seek a retreat from the cares and troubles of life—then, "let the poor, the friendless and afflicted, as they pass my grave, point to the humble spot, and say—here lies the man whose compassion soothed my woes, whose maxims tranquilized my perturbed spirits, and whose bounty relieved my pressing necessity; let the widow and the orphan breathe my epitaph in the sigh of greatful remembrance, and I ask no more. To the aspiring and ambitious, I freely resign the rest."

A practical religion—a religion which consists in the faithful discharge of duty is a pleasant but a severe one. To avoid this and yet to be religious, men have formed as many creeds almost as there are stars in the firmament of heaven, to make it consist in faith. But it is unavailing. "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works," says James.

How many substitutes have mankind sought out to supply the place of this pure and undefiled religion. Some make it consist in a miraculous change of heart, which seldom long effects the character; and some make its evidences consist in the narrative of an experience, which too many have been taught to repeat. Now we do not blame such persons, for we really believe they are honest. But

to all the declamation which we hear in its favor, we oppose but one, one simple request. *Show us we say a modern experience within the lids of the bible, and it sufficeth us.* It is notorious that it cannot be done. And as for miraculous conversions there is but one instance there, and the like has never been repeated since. We mean the case of Paul. By no argument whatever can it be proved that any other primitive christian was converted by miraculous or supernatural means. My friends, if you would be religious let me exhort you to follow Christ. Follow him in his devotional spirit—follow him in his submission to his Father's will—follow him in his acts of obedience to his Father's laws—and follow him too in his *inducements* to obedience. *He was obedient, not from the fear of punishment; but from love and regard to his Father's character.* Weigh well the different religions in the world before you embrace them; and in the mean time, follow Christ by a good life; and when you find any thing better than this, *it will be time enough then to become otherwise religious.*

Practical.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

SOBRIETY.

The scriptures of truth require a sober and consistent walk in life, as well as the exercise of the benevolent feelings and sentiments of the heart and understanding. Still people of candor may differ in their definitions of sobriety. They are extremely liable to judge of the term by their own natural temperament of feelings and passions. Such as are naturally of a very sedate and even turn of mind, will require others to come to their standard, or not allow them to be sober and serious people. On the opposite hand, those who are of a more uneven and changeable temperament, at one time elated to the heavens, and at another depressed to the dust, in their feelings, will not assent to that definition of sobriety, which the others have given.

And we find men so unreasonable, sometimes, as to fix their standard of sobriety, as required in scripture, just after some remarkable excitement, when they are not in a capacity to exercise their passions and faculties, as in the ordinary, every-day concerns of life. They would have us believe that cheerfulness and pleasantries were criminal, being incompatible with christian sobriety. But, what can be more arbitrary and irrational? Would a man be accounted reasonable, who, having just escaped from the most imminent danger to which he had been exposed on the brink of an awful precipice, should require others to quadrate their feelings, according to his own, *at that moment*, or accuse them of levity, and indifference to danger? And is the man any more reasonable, who supposes himself to have just escaped from an endless, burning furnace, and condemns every thing as insobriety, which does not agree with his feelings, barely relieved from insupportable affright? The sobriety which christianity requires, is a freedom from all inordinate passions. It is that self command or self government, by which we are enabled to exercise our faculties and passions and appetites, without abusing them. In the various pursuits of life, men ought to act soberly and deliberately.

In the accumulation of property, they ought not to be avaricious and covetous; in the estimate of possessions, keep clear of excess and extravagance; in inquiring for truth, be careful not to run into presumption; under afflictions and bereavements, not become impatient and unreasonable; in forming an opinion of others, never be censorious; and in maintaining their own views, not be dogmatical and overbearing. In all the above points, and many others which might be mentioned, an inordinate, excessive use of the passions and feelings, is insobriety, indeed and in truth. It is by the proper management of our affections, and the rational exercise of our powers, that we live soberly, as the scriptures require.

Temperance also may be included in the requisition. But how to treat this part of our subject, we know not. So many bold, but ineffectual attempts

have been made to suppress the growing evil of intemperance, that conjecture has become almost useless. Legislators are at a loss to know what measures to adopt. They have enacted laws, but who shall see them executed? So long as the existing means of intemperance can be obtained at so little cost, and with such extreme facility, and the powerful influence of custom and fashion is favorable to the continuance and extension of that evil, how can we hope to succeed in its suppression? As our kingdom is not of this world, we shall not attempt to intrude on the prerogatives of deliberative assemblies. As the regularly authorized powers, we call not in question their wisdom, prudence and benevolence in the discharge of their duties in the hall of legislation. But, in faithfulness to our profession, we ask to be heard, while we recommend a consideration of the great force of *example*, of personal, individual example. Let our rulers, judges, magistrates and other distinguished individuals, discard and disuse the customs which now prevail in the common use of ardent spirits, and we believe it would do more for the cause of sobriety—temperance—than any other measure that could be adopted.

S.
FROM THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

in the doctrines which I was endeavoring to support would be a sure passport to eternal damnation. But before submitting to this sentence, I would beg leave to appeal to a higher tribunal. I affirm that nearly all the disputes which ever arose upon religious topics, involve only such points as are not essential to true religion. I take it that if a man love God with all his heart, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself, his chance of acceptance at the day of judgment is the same, under the banners of whatever sect he may think proper to range himself. It would be much happier for themselves and the world, if instead of giving themselves up blindly to the influence of caprice, prejudice and passion, they were more ready to be guided by *reason*, and more willing to listen to the dictates of *common sense*.

H. A.

Christian Intelligencer.

PORTLAND, SATURDAY, SEPT. 24, 1825.

"EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH."

TO AN ORTHODOX NEIGHBOR.

My Dear Friend—I listened with solicitude and seriousness to your solemn remarks, a few evenings since, on the eternity of hell-torments. After you had offered several interesting conjectures and suppositions upon that dismal subject, you began to speak with more confidence, and said, that, in whatever the miseries of hell might consist, they would be extremely aggravated and increased, by the sinner's discovering, when forever too late to reform, that he had been the *sole cause* of his own eternal ruin. He would remember the many opportunities which he had enjoyed of being saved, but to his own everlasting condemnation had stubbornly refused to accept of salvation. He would remember that he had been favored with the holy Bible, the means of grace, the labors of a pious minister, the prayers of God's people, and perhaps the earnest prayers of religious parents; and yet, alas, had refused to be saved, saying, I will not have this man, Jesus Christ, to reign over me.

Now, Sir, as you expressed a very serious desire that all who heard you would meditate on the subject of your remarks, I have so far complied, as to devote sufficient time to it, to satisfy my own mind, that unless you offer some rational explanation, your observations will be attended with no beneficial consequences. I do not ask nor wish you to engage in controversy, on doctrinal questions; but simply to explain your *real meaning* and obviate some sober difficulties. As you expressed yourself unconditionally, in the above named instance, you either knew whereof you were affirming, or you were very imprudent, not to say any thing worse. When we treat of infinite things, our words should be few and chosen. No man ought positively to assert things, concerning an endless hell, unless he has some knowledge of such facts. With an heart, therefore, open to conviction, I come to you in a neighborly, friendly way, and ask for some information on this weighty and infinite subject.

While I was carefully attending to your declarations in relation to what the damned sinner would realize and remember in hell, I could not avoid an occasional glance, by way of recollection upon what you had previously told me in conversation, concerning the doctrine of *election* and *reprobation*, &c. But to say nothing about that point, suffer me to propose to you, a few of the queries which oc-

I was led into this train of thought upon the errors and follies of religion, by an *incidental* remark made to me in the heat of controversy, that a belief

eur to my mind. On due reflection I am led to inquire, whether the sinner will not remember one thing, in hell, as well as another. If he remembers that he had the labors of a pious minister, will he not also recollect what that minister told him? that he was born into the world *totally depraved*, helpless and guilty? that he was as unable to change his own corrupt heart or perform one acceptable deed, as he was to create a world? Will he not recollect the many instances in which the good preacher told him, that nothing short of the wonder-working, almighty power of God, could pluck him as a brand from the burning, and make him a child of heaven? Well, if he remembers all this, will he be so impious as to think, that the dear minister did not tell the truth? or if he did, will the sinner be so foolish as to think he was the cause of his own ruin? Was he the cause of the *decree* by which he was born *totally depraved*? for nothing but that decree and his *depravity* hindered his salvation. But suppose the judgment to have set, and the sinner's doom to have been unalterably fixed. Let it be known to an assembled universe that he was one, whom the Omnipotent Eye foresaw would perish, from all eternity, and all this in agreement with the divine decrees; and then, I ask, will you still say, there was a time when that sinner might have been saved? My dear Sir, prove that position, and I engage solemnly, on the honor of a man and a christian, never again to oppose your doctrine. Show this to your minister, and tell him, here is a favorable chance for making a convert to his system, and of course, of saving a soul, worth more than all the stars that glitter above, from endless torment. Untie this *Gordian Knot*, and nerveless will be the arm that now wields the pen, in conscientious opposition to *orthodoxy*, so called by its authors.

The following article was received sometime since, with several others from the same pen, but was committed to the common depository of communications for the *Intelligencer*, and we presume has escaped the attention of the Editor. As he is now absent on a visit to the westward, we have taken the liberty to publish it, with a request that some of our correspondents will do him and the public the favor, by forwarding an ANSWER in season for the next paper.

B.

A SERIOUS QUESTION.

The following Question was lately put to me by an orthodox preacher, apparently with a candid and serious mind.

"Why is it not enough that God invites all sinners to repent and believe the gospel, that they may be saved; while those who do not, shall be damned? Why need sinners be told that God will certainly save them, even though they do not repent and believe, in this life? It is certain that we read, that God spake by his prophet, saying, "look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth." But do we read that *they* shall be saved who do not believe, who do not look? If a man repents and believes the gospel, he is assured that he shall be saved? If a man does not repent and believe the gospel, why should he have the same assurance of salvation? If a man can be assured of salvation without repentance and faith, what will he care about obtaining these gifts of God, these graces of a christian?

You may say, it will be for his present good or worldly comfort, to be penitent and believing. True, But multitudes know nothing of the peace of re-pentance, nor the joy of believing; and will be dis-

posed to neglect this great salvation, if they can hope to escape endless misery, or all misery in a future state. Now, sir, is it not most likely that preaching endless misery to the impenitent and unbelieving, is better calculated to do them good than to preach limited, or no future punishment in another world, to all mankind?"

This is a serious question, and the writer wishes for a serious answer, that he may show it to his inquiring friend.

SEEK TRUTH.**"CHRISTIAN VISITANT SOCIETY."**

We extract the following article from the "*Religious Inquirer*," published at Hartford, (Conn.) in commendation of the above society, recently formed in this State by the *Eastern Association of Universalists*; and which, we are happy to add, is now in successful operation.

"We learn with much pleasure that the Eastern Association of Universalists has formed a society, called the *Christian Visitant Society*, to procure subscriptions or contributions for the printing of cheap religious Tracts, inculcating the purest morality, and explaining the difficult parts of the scriptures in a clear and edifying manner. They speak most feelingly of the moral waste in their bounds, and throughout the State, and very judiciously attribute its sterility to the want of correct information on the subject of universal grace. We hail the formation of this society as an auspicious omen, and hope the Universalists throughout the connexion may follow so praiseworthy an example. By the adoption of this course, every part of the community might learn our sentiments, and thereby entertain a just opinion of our faith, while the young and uninformed among us might receive the most valuable instruction with little expense."

ROCKINGHAM ASSOCIATION.

The *Rockingham Association of Universalists* held its annual meeting at Nottingham, N. H. on Wednesday the last day of August, and Thursday the first day of September. Owing to a misunderstanding respecting the time of holding this meeting, (it having been generally understood that it was to be on the first Wednesday and Thursday in Sept.) there were only two ministering brethren present, Br. HOSEA BALLOU, of Boston, and Br. EDWARD TURNER, of Portsmouth; the religious services however were well attended, and two discourses delivered each day. The Association was adjourned, to be held at *Meredith Bridge, N. H.* on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday of August, 1826.

A REQUEST.

Mr. EDITOR—I have noticed in some of the religious publications of the day, a list of the names of those subscribers who are punctual in paying their subscription according to the conditions on which the paper is published; and as I have been a constant supporter of the *Christian Intelligencer* since its commencement, and always been punctual in paying for it, I do not wish to have my neighbors suppose I am among the *delinquents* to whom notices are frequently addressed. Will you not, therefore, have the goodness to insert the names of such as comply with your CONDITIONS; which will supersede the necessity of sending receipts to a distance, when you receive money by mail?

Yours, &c.

T. Z.

G—, Sept. 1825.

[The Editor being absent, we cannot say what course he will pursue in relation to the above request; but since it is not unfrequently the case that subscribers are in *arrears* for several volumes, we should think it advisable to publish the names of the *delinquents*, and the sums for which they stand *indebted*. Our correspondent will therefore excuse us for postponing a compliance with his request until the return of the Editor.]

B.

NEW PUBLICATION.

Proposals have been issued at *Cleaveland, (Ohio)*, for publishing by subscription, a weekly paper, entitled the "*Messenger of Salvation*," to be edited by J. S. GREENE, preacher of the gospel; the object of which will be "to support and defend the doctrine of God's impartial and illimitable grace in the free and final salvation of all mankind." The work will be commenced on the first of January next, if sufficient encouragement should be given. It is to be printed in octavo form, 8 pages in each number, at \$2 per ann. It has long been thought, that a periodical paper devoted to the above glorious object, was greatly needed in that part of our Lord's heritage, where the want of ministerial gifts are severely felt; and we doubt not it will be made the means, in the hands of God, of doing much good. We wish our brother success, and heartily recommend him to the patronage of a liberal and enlightened community.

CONVERSION IN THE MINISTRY.

Information has been received (says the *Universalist Magazine*,) that the Rev. MICHAEL SMITH, of Union District, (S. C.), formerly of the *Baptist communion*, now publicly defends and preaches the faith which God preached to Abraham, saying "in thy seed shall all nations be blessed."

NOTICE.

The subscriber hereby gives notice to the agents and subscribers for the *Christian Visitants*, that one thousand copies of *Visitant*, No. 1, containing twelve pages, entitled "*Answer to the question, Why are you a Universalist?*" are now published in Belfast, and ready for delivery. Agents are therefore requested to obtain their subscriptions and make immediate returns, if they wish to have a proportion of the first number. The full amount of what is due to subscribers will not be forwarded of one number; but a proportion will be reserved, to be paid in future numbers on different subjects. The next No. entitled "*Objections to Universalism considered*," will be published in the course of two or three weeks. Visitants will always be forwarded, when practicable, by private conveyance.

The subscriber would also take this opportunity to inform the friends of truth, that a lively interest in favor of the publication seems to be taken by the public; and the very liberal contributions which have been made, render it certain, that the plan adopted by the Association, will abundantly succeed. He would furthermore observe, that as he has necessarily made, and must continue to make, considerable personal sacrifice, both as it relates to pecuniary and official aid, (in order that subscribers may have the Visitants at the moderate price of one mill a page,) he would esteem it a favor, if those who have correspondence to make with him, concerning the Visitants, would have the goodness to pay the postage of such communications as are forwarded by mail. Wm. A. DREW, Sec'y.
Belfast, Sept. 12.

MARRIED

In this town, Mr. Winthrop Bird to Miss Lucy S. Pierce.—Mr. Jefferson B. Usher to Miss Jane Teague.—Capt. Samuel Waterhouse to Mrs. Theodosia Bradbury.

DIED

In this town, widow — Lewis, in the 99th year of her age.—George, son of Mr. Thomas Lewis, aged 11 years.—Mrs. Eunice Stone.—Mrs. Elizabeth Gore, aged 74.—A child of Mr. Luther Jordan, aged 1 year and 7 mo.—A child of Mr. Alpheus Shaw, aged 4 years.

In Levant, on the 25th ult. an infant son of John B. Dods, aged one year.

In Chesterville, on the 25th ult. after a short but distressing illness, JAMES MADISON LOWELL, son of the late Joshua B. Lowell, Esq. aged 16 years. It is but just to say of the deceased, that he possessed those amiable qualities which rendered him beloved and respected in life and lamented in death, by all his numerous acquaintance.

Sacred Lyre.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

CEASE fond mother ! O cease in pain to weep !
Thy infant son lies wrapt in peaceful sleep :
In death's cold arms his lovely form is laid,
While angels hover round his peaceful shade.
Those anxious cares, that late possessed thy breast
For his relief, are once more sunk to rest.
The scene is closed, thy smiling babe is gone
Where sickness, pain and death can never come.
Death, cruel death ! yet messenger so kind,
From this frail clay, to snatch his tender mind,
And give it wings to mount where angels be,
Wrapt in the joys of immortality.
The tender bud just putting forth its bloom,
Received the morning sun but fell ere noon,
On it a mother gaz'd with fond desire,
She turn'd, then gazed again, and saw't expire.
Weep not ; thou hast a saint in heav'n above,
Who guards thy head, with more than mother's love.
When night's dark curtains close around are drawn,
He'll watch thy pillow, till the blushing dawn.
Thy guardian angel he shall constant be,
Till death shall stell thy longing spirit free ;
Then shalt thou join, before thy Father's throne,
A blood-washed world, of which thy son is one.

Lerant, Aug. 25th, 1825.

Miscellaneous.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

A SHORT DIALOGUE.

Freewiller. I think folks had better let all other books alone except the bible ; and only read the scriptures, and I believe there'd not be so much learned of what this, that, and the other have written.

Universalist. Yes, I am of your opinion, had there never been any other book but the bible read on theology by the present age, the christian world, this moment, would have been far more enlightened ; but—

F. (Sternly)—I advise you as a friend, to let these Universalists Authors alone, and read the bible more, and you'd not learn so much to tell your neighbors.

U. I thank you for your advice ; though somewhat needless ; for I assure you I prize the bible far above all the voluminous writings in the universe. But you seem to insinuate, I have laid the bible aside, and began committing authors to memory—I deny such a charge.

F. No, no, I would not accuse you of such a thing. But to be plain, I think you have read authors too much, and the bible too little.

U. Perhaps it is the case ; be that as it may ; there is one little sentence I have read in the bible, whether I find it in other books or not, and I heartily accord with it, viz. : "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour ; who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

F. I believe it is the *will* of God all men should be saved ; but man is *rebellious and will not submit*.

U. Now consider a moment ; which is the greater, the "will of God" or the "will of man"?

F. What's the use to talk so—do you expect any will be saved, and go to heaven in *their sins* ?

U. Certainly not. Such an idea is inconsistent with itself ; for it was said of Jesus, "He shall save his people from their sins ; not in *their sins*."

F. Now while I think of it ; I will ask you, and I want you should tell me, whether you believe there is any such thing as sin against God ?

U. Directly speaking, it is my opinion there is not, that is, no sin to *injure him*, or to *frustrate his will* or purpose ; but in a finite or moral—

F. (Vehemently.) I don't care nothing about your moral—that's not answering the question. I want to know, whether you believe there is any sin against God ?

U. I say as I said before, there is ; but not directly against God : there are human deeds or works, recognized as sin, by a certain law, called the Law of God.

F. (More vehemently.) But answer me the question ; is there any sin against God ?

U. Why I have told you ; but you won't hear nor understand me. I know—

F. Is there any sin against God, I mean ?

U. If I tell you again, you won't hear me, much less understand me.

F. It is an easy question to answer ; you can say yes, or no. I could answer it very easily ; and am not ashamed to, neither.

U. Then do it—it is vain for me to say more.

F. I believe there is sin against a Holy and Righteous God ; and I believe he doesn't look upon sin with the least grain of allowance. I believe I sin against God every day ; I believe I have got something to do to get salvation, or I never expect to be saved. I must confess with shame, I have come short of my duty, and that, every day of my life.

U. I acknowledge, with due reverence and profound submission, I have got nothing to do, either to get, or to merit eternal salvation beyond the grave : For I rejoice in believing the work of eternal salvation was accomplished long ere I drew the vital breath ; and the faithfulness of God has secured the same, without the profilers of human works, to the whole purchased possession of a risen Saviour. And I would only add : those who profess and do not ; I would liken them to "that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

F. Well then, if you have nothing to do, I wish you'd not be so faithful round among your neighbors.

U. I would further observe ; I profess to have duties devolving upon me, and that important ones too. My whole duty to both God and man is briefly comprehended in this one word, even *love*. But be informed this is only necessary to my present salvation, or social and evangelical usefulness ; and also the grand effluvia of a living faith ; yet gives me no right or title to an admittance into the haven of eternal rest.

SIDNEY.

BENEVOLENCE.

"Wide as the sun his bright dominion spreads,
"Heav'n born benevolence her bounty sheds,
"She meek eyed goddess, quits th' angelic sphere
"To banish grief, and dry the human tear."

BENEVOLENCE is a virtue, the most amiable in its nature, and beneficial in its effects. It sheds diffusive lustre, wherever it is exercised. Its cheering influence enlivens the gloomy habitation of sorrow, makes gladsome the way of the afflicted, relieves the sorrow of the unfortunate, wipes the big-swo'l'n tear from the sorrowed cheek of grief, and administers a healing balm to the wound of the distressed.

The motives for it are visible in every part of life. Mortality and imperfection are inscribed on every object around us. Even man, the first in the order of created beings, is frail and unstable. The best of his race are liable to be led astray, and the wisest are not unfrequently in an error. Objects of charity present themselves on all sides, and every day affords us occasion to exercise our candor and benevolence.

The Deity himself, in our creation, and the circumstances in which he has here placed us, has evidently indicated that man was formed for the exercise of the social affections. He has made us mutually dependent, and ever exposed to want and misfortune. He has so intimately blended our duty and interest, that while performing the one, we directly subserve the other. More than this, he has given us a glorious example of benevolence, in creating us rational agents, in endowing us with intellectual faculties, which constitute the dignity of our nature, in affording us so many fountains of pleasure, but above all by implanting within us sympathetic feelings, from the exercise of which, we derive the most noble and voluptuous enjoyment.

Benevolence, at the same time it tends to individual happiness, promotes the common good.—Were all men actuated by a spirit of philanthropy, there would be an end to broils and dissensions.—

Instead of wars, factions, and disturbances in communities, we should see mankind united as brethren, and mutually reciprocating good offices. All motives of self interest would be absorbed in the more generous desires, of increasing the general welfare. Peace would extend her "olive wand," and under her mild reign, the great family of man would enjoy security and happiness.

No longer would the poor cry for bread in the streets. The unfortunate widow, in the day of her affliction, would no longer be destitute of a helper, and the mild voice of charity would become responsive, to the plaintive wail of the orphan. Reason would usurp the place of passion ; and man no longer seeking revenge in his neighbor's suffering, would bury all wrongs in oblivion, and forgive even the seventy-seventh offence.

Not only should benevolence be employed in relieving the misfortune of others, but in forming an opinion of their actions and character.—Too liable are we, in our judgments of persons, to be swayed by prejudice, or partiality. Too often is it the case, that the innocent suffer by rash and inconsiderate determination.

When we consider the frailty of our natures, and how cautious we ought to be of injuring another's good reputation, we shall find it more for our mutual convenience, to forgive, than to censure ; and instead of depreciating another's merit, to draw the mantle of charity o'er the imperfections of a brother.

THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

"The Mosaic Institution was preparatory to that of the Gospel. In it the doctrine of immortality was but imperfectly revealed. Future rewards and punishments composed *no part* of the sanction of the law of Moses. Indeed some learned and pious Christians are of opinion that the doctrine is not to be found in this dispensation. We cannot with certainty say, that the devout Jews, who believed in a future state, adopted their belief merely on the authority of the sacred books.—The result of our review then is this. The doctrine of the immortality of man was not established with moral certainty before the appearance of Jesus Christ in our world.

Bancroft.

BACKBITING.

There is a powerful propensity in human nature to what is properly denominated *backbiting*, i.e. to make the faults of an absent person the subject of familiar conversation. This is a vice so mean, so mischievous, so cowardly, so characteristic of littleness as well as malignity, that *every man* should hate it, and every wise man be ashamed of it. O what wisdom, mercy and beauty is there in this direction :—"If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his faults between thee and him alone ; and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

Books For Sale.

FOR sale by JOHN GILBERT, at *Moultonborough, N. H.* "BALFOUR'S INQUIRY," price \$1 ; also, his Reply to Mr. Sabine, price 50 cts. : Kneeland's *Lectures on Universal Benevolence*, price 75 cts. ; the "Christian Intelligencer," Vol. IV. half bound, for \$1.

Also, for sale by JOSEPH BLISH, Bath, Me.

Kneeland's Translation of the New-Testament, price \$1 50 ; also Kneeland's Lectures, price 75 cts. ; together with a variety of Pamphlets, at various prices.

JUST PUBLISHED,

And received for sale at this Office—price 12 1-2 cts.

A SERMON, delivered before the Eastern Association of Universalists, at Wayne, July 7, 1825—By Rev. SYLVANUS COBB, of Waterville.—"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts xvii. 30, 31.